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PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHDG #0962 2371815  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 251815Z AUG 09  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3258  
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHWN/AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN PRIORITY 2266  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 1019  
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN PRIORITY 1174  
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON PRIORITY 2965  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ AUG 0612  
RUEHPO/AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO PRIORITY 1298  
RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE PRIORITY 5037  
RUEHSP/AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN PRIORITY 2005  
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0279  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUMISTA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 000962

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CAR,

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [ECON](#) [KCRM](#) [KJUS](#) [DR](#)

SUBJECT: CONTINUED STRAINS BETWEEN DOMINICANS AND HAITIANS

REF: A. PORT AU PRINCE 463

[1](#)B. SANTO DOMINGO 537

[1](#)1. SUMMARY: The 8/8 murder of a Dominican, allegedly by a Haitian, sparked a new wave of unrest directed against Haitian residents of Tamboril and Moca, resulting in the burning of 33 homes occupied by Haitians, demands for the repatriation of Haitian illegal immigrants, the flight of Haitian residents from the two towns, and threats of further violence. Dominican National Police and Migration authorities have stepped in to restore calm, many Haitians reportedly have returned to these communities, and the situation appears to have been brought under control. This incident and its aftermath illustrates the continued tensions surrounding the Haitian migrant community in the DR. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. On August 8, a Dominican was killed and robbed of his motorcycle, 8,000 pesos (USD 222), and his cell phone by several Haitian nationals in the town of Tamboril (near Santiago, the DR's second largest city). The police subsequently detained four Haitians in connection with this crime. Nonetheless, residents in Tamboril reacted by reportedly burning 15 homes occupied by Haitians, demanding the repatriation of Haitian nationals in the community, and threatening to lynch any Haitian found in the streets. News sources reported another 18 homes occupied by Haitians were destroyed in the nearby town of Moca. This led an unknown number of Haitians to abandoned their homes in this area.

[1](#)3. The Secretary of the Armed Forces condemned any acts of violence or retaliation targeting Haitians. The GoDR quickly responded to the crisis by increasing police patrols and migration inspectors in the area. Government officials state the situation has since calmed down, with no new reports of violence or threats against Haitians. Many of the Haitians who fled following the violence, have since have returned to their homes. Haitian media sources reported that more than 10 Haitians were repatriated in connection with these incidents; Post is checking out the validity of these stories.

[1](#)4. Since January, NGOs have reported more than a dozen killings of Haitian nationals in the Dominican Republic. As reported previously (Refs A-B), the May 2009 murder of a Dominican (allegedly by a Haitian) and the revenge

decapitation of a Haitian provoked tensions between Haiti and the DR, fanned by the media. Cell phone photos of the decapitated Haitian lying in the street also circulated via internet, adding to the outrage. Anti-Haitian protests took place in various neighborhoods in response to the publicity.

15. Vigilante justice in general also is a recurring problem in Dominican society with at least four cases of such killings reported so far this year. In recent weeks, mobs in neighborhoods of Santo Domingo and Santiago killed alleged criminals who had robbed or assaulted people in their communities. Many Dominicans believe that their justice system is inadequate, and some take the law into their own hands, rather than seek assistance from the police.

16. COMMENT: Undocumented and poor Haitians, even those who were born here, are in an especially precarious position in the Dominican Republic. On the other hand, there is a well-established community of prosperous Haitians in Santiago, which does not appear to be discriminated against. While both Dominicans and Haitians suspected of criminal activity are subject to vigilantism, it is increasingly evident that Haitians without link to a particular crime are being subjected to vigilante violence due to their shared national and/or racial links to the suspected perpetrator. Post will continue to monitor the situation and report on any new developments. END COMMENT.  
BULLEN